
ANTICIPATORY GUIDANCE

15 Months

Date: _____ Height: _____ Weight: _____ OFC: _____

The following comments are designed to help you enjoy your new baby and develop confidence in yourself as a parent. They are not intended as a substitute for well-baby visits. Remember no two babies have exactly the same makeup or the same needs. Your baby is an individual with his or her own special growth pattern. Comparing the growth and development of your baby with other children is not a good idea and usually causes needless worry. Never hesitate to ask for guidance concerning specific problems. This is the reason for regular well-baby checkups.

Parenting and Behavioral

- The next few months are perhaps the easiest age during a baby's life. Your baby still has relative immunity to most infections. Babies are happy to see people, yet they do not demand a lot of attention nor can they get up and crawl around to get into things. Your child will become responsive when you talk to them and will begin to blossom into a "real" person.
- Continue to hold, cuddle, talk to, sing to, and rock your baby as much as you can. Every interaction with your child stimulates brain development.
- Encourage your baby to "speak" by talking to him/her during dressing, bathing, feeding, playing, walking, and driving. Stimulate your child with age appropriate toys. Hang a rattle, mobile or some other bright object across the crib so that your infant can begin watching and reaching for it.
- Parents should continue to make sure they get adequate rest. A lot of moms still need a nap, so take one when baby naps. Go for a daily walk with the baby for fresh air. Mothers should have had a postpartum checkup by now.

Development

- Have you noticed that your baby's smile has improved, especially when he/she sees you? Infants at this age begin to show pleasure in their interactions with their parents.
- Before long, the neck muscles will begin to develop, allowing your baby to gain more head control. Babies will soon be able to hold their head steady so that when you pick up your baby, the head will not bob around. Until this happens, however, be prepared to give extra head support.

- Your baby will begin to grasp a rattle or tightly hold on to your finger.
- Between now and the 4-month checkup, most babies will start to lift their head, neck and upper chest on their forearms when placed on their tummies, craning their necks like a turtle to see what is going on. They will also straighten out their legs when you let them sit on your lap, and they may try to stand with support. This will not cause them to become bow-legged.

Feeding

- **Breast fed babies should continue the Tri-Vi-Sol vitamins.**
- Ensure that your infant is gaining the appropriate weight.
- Discuss with your baby's doctor any problems you are having with breast or bottle feeding. Remember, "spitting up" is common and as long as your baby is thriving, the spitting is a "nuisance" rather than a "problem."
- Infant feeding demands will continue to vary from day to day. By 10 weeks of age, some babies are feeding only four to five times a day (breast or bottle) while others require more frequent feeding times. This is normal. Hopefully, the interval between feedings is at least every three to four hours during the day with lengthened intervals at night. Do not put cereal in a bottle unless instructed to do so by your baby's doctor.
- Do not use a microwave oven to heat formula.
- Never put your baby to bed with a bottle or prop it in their mouth.
- Between now and the next checkup, many babies begin to drool. This is quite common and does not necessarily indicate early teething. It is probably due to a lot of saliva that the baby has not yet learned to swallow.

Sleep

- **Always put your baby to sleep on their back.** Alternate the end of the crib where you place the baby's head so that they are not always sleeping on the same side of their head. This will minimize flattening.
- Begin to establish a bedtime routine and other habits to discourage night awakening.
- Infants sleep most of the day but sleep patterns vary from baby to baby. Many babies still have that "fussy" period during the late afternoon or early evening. It is OK for moms and dads to give themselves a break from that time by getting assistance from relatives and friends.
- Most babies will sleep through the night by 3-4 months old. To achieve this, many babies need encouragement. Put the infant to bed when they are drowsy but awake. Avoid rocking or holding your baby until they fall asleep. Your baby needs to learn to fall asleep on their own. Try to ignore the squirming and whimpering. Your infant may go back to sleep on his or her own!

Immunizations

- Your child should receive the recommended vaccines according to the established immunization schedule.
- Influenza vaccine is recommended for household contacts of infants during the fall or pre-flu season.
- Minor reactions to immunizations such as slight fever, redness, knots at the sight the shot was given, are all common side effects.

Safety

- Continue to use an infant car seat that is properly secured and rear facing at all times.
- Continue to put the baby to sleep on his/her back or side and in his/her own bed.
- Never leave the baby alone or with a young sibling or pet.

- Do not leave your baby alone in a tub of water or on high places such as changing tables, beds, sofas or chairs.
- Be aware that even babies at this age can surprise themselves (and you) by rolling over unexpectedly.
- Continue to insist that the baby's environment is free of tobacco.
- Never shake or jiggle the baby's head vigorously.
- Never leave the infant alone in the house or car, even for a minute.
- Do not place strings or necklaces about a baby's neck or use a string to attach a pacifier.
- Never hold your baby while drinking a hot liquid.
- If your home uses gas appliances, install and maintain carbon monoxide detectors.
- Test smoke detectors regularly. Install new batteries with the time changes in the spring and fall.

Eliminations

- Your baby will have his or her own frequency of bowel movements. It is possible for breast fed babies to begin to have loose stools as infrequently as once a week. As long as stools are soft, this is normal and does not indicate constipation.
- Most babies strain, grunt and fuss when they have bowel movements. This does not mean they are constipated.

When to Call the Doctor

- Fever. (temp > 100.4 degrees rectally)
- Not gaining weight.
- Excessive vomiting, especially if it is forceful and goes across the room.
- Uninterested in eating.
- Irritability or lethargy.
- Unusual skin rashes.
- Your baby seems very stiff or very floppy.

Resources

- Poison Control 1-800-222-1222
- American Academy of Pediatrics www.aap.org
 - www.kidsgrowth.com
 - www.paalex.com

This information is for educational purposes only and it should be used only as a guide.